

**Carroll, Rhonda**

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**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2016 9:51 AM  
**To:** JudTestimony  
**Subject:** HB 5344 AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORT FOR ANIMALS THAT ARE NEGLECTED OR TREATED CRUELLY

Testimony Concerning HB 5344 AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORT FOR ANIMALS THAT ARE NEGLECTED OR TREATED CRUELLY

Judiciary Committee, February 24, 2016  
Submitted by: Laurie Kaufman

I would like to thank the Judiciary Committee for the opportunity to express my support of HB 5344 AN ACT CONCERNING SUPPORT FOR ANIMALS THAT ARE NEGLECTED OR TREATED CRUELLY

**Animal cruelty is an act of violence and rarely occurs in isolation.** Too often, our state's courts seem to overlook this fact. Abusers get away with a hand slap, or worse yet, are not even prosecuted at all.

**80% of the animal cruelty charges brought against individuals in Connecticut are dismissed. For these cases, there is no justice for the abused animal, and potentially violent criminals are permitted to walk free.**

Accumulating evidence demonstrates a strong link between violence to animals and violence to people. In recognition of that link in 2011 CT enacted a law requiring Cross Reporting of Child Abuse and Animal Cruelty. And this January, for the first time ever, the FBI began collecting data on animal abuse cases.

However CT's animal cruelty laws and reporting requirements will mean nothing unless serious violations are prosecuted. A November 2015 report by Connecticut's Office of Legislative Research shows that between 2005 and 2015, only 3500 cases were brought under the animal cruelty statute and of those cases a full 80% never made it to Court (47% not prosecuted (nolled) and 33% were dismissed).

**This legislation will establish a volunteer advocate to represent animals in court who are the victims of cruelty. The aim of the bill is to reduce the number of dismissed cases, and help ensure punishments fit the severity of the violence committed.**

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,

Laurie Kaufman  
West Hartford, CT

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